

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 11550 262034 Z

51

ACTION SS-25

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P R 261823 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9567
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
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S E C R E T PARIS 11550

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: MARR, LY, FG
SUBJECT: LIBYAN MIRAGE TRANSFER

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

REF: A) STATE 077837; B) PARIS 11487

1. ONE REASON FRENCH MAY HAVE HANDLED MIRAGE ISSUE IN RATHER
CONFUSED AND CONTRADICTORY FASHION IS NOT SO MUCH DISAGREEMENT
ABOUT BASIC INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION, BUT RATHER DIFFERING
VIEWS ABOUT NATURE OF "TRANSFER" AND HOW TO HANDLE ISSUE IN
FRENCH DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONTEXT. ALTHOUGH IN EARLY STAGES
THERE COULD HAVE BEEN DOUBT IN FRENCH INTELLIGENCE AND MILITARY
CIRCLES ABOUT WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE, SUBSEQUENTLY FRENCH PROBABLY
MORE CONCERNED TO FIND OUT WHETHER TRANSFER TEMPORARY OR
PERMANENT AND WHAT WERE LIBYAN AND EGYPTIAN INTENTIONS FOR
FUTURE.

2. BECAUSE OF INCREASINGLY SHRILL PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MIRAGE
TRANSFER AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTIRE FRENCH MIDDLE EAST POLICY,
ISSUE HAS BECOME ONE OF CONSIDERABLE SENSITIVITY TO GOF.
ISRAELIS, IN PARTICULAR, AS EVIDENCED BY AMBASSADOR BEN NATAN'S
STATEMENTS APRIL 25 (REPORTED REF B), ARE PUTTING GREAT PRESSURE
ON FRENCH TO ADMIT THAT TRANSFER HAS TAKEN PLACE AND THAT HENCE
EMBARGO SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT IN LIGHT OF ASSURANCES
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DATING FROM 1970.

3. PROBLEM FOR US IS COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT GOF HAS BEEN GIVING US CONTRADICTORY INFORMATION, AND THAT AT QUAI AT LEAST, WHERE MORE SENSITIVE FRENCH INTELLIGENCE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN DISSEMINATED AT WORKING LEVEL, OFFICIALS HAVE INSISTED TRANSFER HAS NOT TAKEN PLACE.

4. WE AGREE THAT AS DEPARTMENT SUGGESRE TO INCLUDE THE KIND OF STATEMENT THAT APPEARS IN THE TAB E TEXT BUT IN BRACKETS COULD PREJUDICE WESTERN SUPPORT OF BERLIN AND GERMAN INTERESTS IN THE POSSIBLE EVENT OF FUTURE DIFFICULTIES WITH BERLIN ACCESS. WE BELIEVE THE US SHOULD TRY HARD TO GET AGREEMENT ON THE INCLUSION OF SUCH MATERIAL IN THE SC RES, EVEN IF BY WAY OF PREAMBLE. FROM THIS VANTAGE THERE IS NO MORE IMPORTANT AND SENSITIVE ASPCT OF THE ENTIRE SCENARIO.
SCALI

CONFIDENTIAL

NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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